(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news- item under the heading "China backs Pak, position on Kashmir" which appeared in the 'Hindu' dated 12th May, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether the matter has been/or is proposed to be taken up with the Chinese Government as a part of India's normalisation of relations with that country and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral, part of the Indian Union.

Non-essential travel to Sri Lanka

2638. SHRI KA. RA. SUBBIAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the lines of US, Britain, whether Government too have issued instructions urging Indian citizens to delay non-essential travel to Sri Lankan Island keeping in view the recent attack by L.TTE on the country's only International airport; and

(b) whether Government have taken up the matter with the Sri Lankan Government about the security aspect of the Indian citizens living there.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The High Commission of India in Colombo maintains regular contact with local authorities and Indian nationals and takes all possible steps to ensure the safety and welfare of Indian nationals.

Attack on Indians in Kuala Lampur

2639. SHRI RAM MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of ethnic Indians died in the recent attack by Malayas in Kuala Lampur, etc.,

(b) whether his Ministry had done or proposed to do. through dioplimatic channels, to protect the Indian community in Malaysia;

(c) whether any protest has been launched with the Malaysian Government on this; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Clashes were reported between Malayas and ethnic Indians in a suburb of Kuala Lumpur on March 8, 2001 resulting in death of 4 ethnic Indians (Malaysian citizens) and one Indian national.

(b) and (c) Although clashes between two groups of Malaysian citizens is an internal matter for Government of Malaysia, the Government of India has conveyed its concern appropriately through diplomatic channels, to the Government of Malaysia in the matter. Regarding the Indian National, the High Commission of India has urged the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to investigate the matter.

(d) Not applicable.

POWs in Pakistani jails

2640. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI ANANTA SETHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has refuted the charges that Indian POWs are in its jails;

(b) whetehr it is also a fact that while refuting the charges on POWs, Pakistan has stated that about 70 Indian nationals who have completed their term of imprisonment in Pakistan are awaiting Indian Government for their deportation to India; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not taking appropriate action in time and by when these persons are likely to be brought to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes Sir, Pakistan has been consistently denying the presence of any POWs in its jails.

(b) and (c) Over the last few months, Government of Pakistan has intimated about the completion of jail terms of 72 detainees. The completion of established procedures including provision of consular access by Government of Pakistan and verification of national status of the detainees is being done before their repatriation to India. Government is continuing to pursue the matter for their early repatriation.

Withdrawal of Nepali citizenship

2641. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state: